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2006 Tourism Marketing Program

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Goals and Vision

- To position York Region as a viable four season visitor destination with attributes to support various consumer and business sector audiences (resident, visitors, tourists, meetings, corporate, conference, travel trade, sport, recreation)
- To motivate new visitors and business sector travellers; to encourage repeat visitation and increase overnight stays.
- To create an environment for the development, growth and sustainability of the Region's tourism industry and strengthen urban and rural communities.

Strategies

The tourism program identifies tactical marketing and promotional initiatives that are aligned with the mandate of the York Region Economic Development Strategy and Vision 2026. The tourism program provides initiatives that leverage and augment local municipal and industry stakeholder tourism efforts and contains elements that complement and support various tourism organizations including, the Ministry of Tourism & Recreation, Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation and Tourism Toronto.

Target Audience and Market Segments

Available research¹ indicates that the focus for capturing overnight stays and increasing leisure, visitor, and meeting revenues should include:

Target Audience:

- Greater Toronto Area
- York Region residents
- Ontario
- Quebec
- Secondary Markets – U.S.A., International

Market Segments:

- Leisure Travellers – residents, visiting friends and relatives, tourists
- Travel Trade – group travel, fully independent travellers (consumers buying packages)
- Corporate/Convention/Conference/Sport – corporate, association SMERF (social, military, educational, religious and fraternal), recreational, sporting events, meetings
- Industry Development – The tourism industry identified the need for the Region to provide strategic direction, educational forums and act as the catalyst for tourism development.

Tourism Product

Leisure travellers are still interested in packages for ease of purchase but are comparison shopping for the best deals. The product must be compelling innovative tourism experiences offering perceived value added services. Provincial research supports arts and culture, hands-on experiential programs and recreational activities are still in demand but it is important to consider the needs of an ageing population and the increasing immigrant communities when planning for the future. The Region's strategy is to work in partnership with the tourism industry to identify key travel product motivators unique to York Region for consumer packages and product offerings.

¹ Research sources used include: 2003 Statistics Canada/Ministry of Tourism & Recreation Overview of Tourism for York Region, Travel Activities & Motivation Study, Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation

Such product development could include:

- Arts & Culture – historical, heritage, quaint town, arts, museums, theatre, shopping, studio tours
- Recreation – eco tourism, garden tours, equestrian, fishing, golf, green tourism (Oak Ridges Moraine, York Region Forests), hiking, biking,
- Farm and Agri-tourism – agricultural and culinary product development

Tourism Partnerships

The foundation of the region's tourism program is working in partnership to enhance the destination profile, extend market reach, build awareness and consumer demand, and generate revenues while leveraging limited industry and regional marketing dollars. Negotiations are underway with Tourism Toronto to secure destination marketing fee funding for the second year in the amount of \$350,000 to support the contributing hotel members in the Toronto east and York Region area. Although this partnership has conditions that limit the participation of hotels that do not participate in the collection of this destination marketing fee, this regional approach provides enhanced marketing efforts that build awareness and demand of the region's tourism experiences and product.

Marketing Program

The tourism marketing program provides a strategic framework that identifies opportunities to maximize the potential of York Region as a place for tourists, visitors, business travellers and residents to live, work and play year round.

The program identifies activities that provide all tourism industry partners with specific information and analysis while facilitating partnership to strengthen competitiveness and build developmental and investment opportunities.

The program supports, augments and leverages local municipal and industry tourism efforts to foster strong urban and rural communities

LEISURE MARKET

Objective: To increase visitation through integrated marketing and media relations initiatives directed at consumers from key target audiences.

OPPORTUNITY	TARGET AUDIENCE	TIME FRAME	PRODUCT STRENGTH	RESOURCES/SUPPORT	TARGETED RESULTS
PROMOTIONAL VEHICLES <i>York Region Visitors' Guide</i> <i>Tourism Web Site</i> www.yorktourism.com	All target audiences All target audiences	February On-going	The region's primary marketing tool and fulfilment for consumer inquiries and advertising programs Region's primary web medium to market to consumers	York Region staff Industry partners <i>Advertising buy-in opportunities</i>	Build awareness, increase visitation , overnight stays and spending in York Region Enhance current site to meet consumer needs
PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT • <i>Arts & Culture</i> • <i>Recreation</i> • <i>Farm Fresh</i> • <i>Stay n Play Packages</i> • <i>Green Tourism</i> • <i>Others tbd</i>	All target audiences and niche markets	Seasonal dependent upon experience being developed and promoted	Development of tourism experiences/promotional brochures that meet consumer demand	Artslink York Region York Region Farm Fresh Association York Region Industry partners Tourism Toronto <i>Advertising buy-in opportunities</i>	Build awareness, increase visitation , overnight stays and spending in York Region

OPPORTUNITY	TARGET AUDIENCE	TIME FRAME	PRODUCT STRENGTH	RESOURCES/SUPPORT	TARGETED RESULTS
MEDIA PROGRAM	Local/GTA media, Ethnic media, Travel Media Association of Canada	To be determined	Selected media invited for hands on experience.	York Region Tourism Toronto Industry Partners	Increased media exposure through print, radio, television mediums
<i>Product Testing Tours</i>					
<i>Travel Media Association of Canada Conference</i>	Members of Canadian Travel Media	Participation to be determined	An opportunity to showcase tourism experiences to key media	York Region staff attend conference	
INFORMATION CHANNELS	All target audiences	All year	Consumers contact York Region for tourism information	Industry Partners to provide brochures and event information	Opportunities to increase industry exposure
<i>1 888 448 0000</i>			Free event listings on web		Increase consumer awareness
<i>website:www. yorktourism.com</i>			Free brochure distribution at York Administrative Building		
<i>Information Centre</i>			Distribution of Visitors Guide		
<i>York Region Welcome Wagon</i>			Touch screen kiosk linked to York Region tourism website	York Region Tourism Web site	
<i>Vaughan Mills Information Kiosk</i>					

OPPORTUNITY	TARGET AUDIENCE	TIME FRAME	PRODUCT STRENGTH	RESOURCES/SUPPORT	TARGETED RESULTS
Industry Presentations/Call Centres	Ontario Tourism Call Centres, Tourism Toronto, Regional Council Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership	May-October	Educate and inform about region's tourism experiences and product offerings	York Region	Provides consumer assistance Increase consumer market reach
York Region SIGNAGE PROGRAM	Tourism and Agricultural businesses		Tourism and Farm Fresh Directional Signage available	York Region– Tourism and Transportation and Works	Build local awareness
CTM BROCHURE DISTRIBUTION	Consumers in all market segments		Distribution of Visitors' Guide	York Region	
CTM YORK REGION DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM	York Region residents, Visiting family & relatives		Distribution of individual business brochures to York Region residents	York Region industry partners discounted program	Increase awareness and consumer demand
ONTARIO TOURISM INFO CENTRES	Two locations: Barrie & Toronto Atrium on Bay	Year round promotion	Key information centres for travellers	York Region	

OPPORTUNITY	TARGET AUDIENCE	TIME FRAME	PRODUCT STRENGTH	RESOURCES/SUPPORT	TARGETED RESULTS
ADVERTISING Could include: • <i>City Parent</i> • <i>Attractions Ontario Passport</i> • <i>55+ Magazine</i> • <i>AAA Ontario TourBook</i> • <i>CAA Publications Leisureways, Going Places, Journey</i> • <i>CAA Quebec Touring</i> • <i>Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership InOntario magazines & web</i> • <i>Tait Collins Great Toronto Getaway</i>	All market segments U.S.A. members Ontario/Manitoba members Quebec members All market segments Buffalo, Rochester, Ottawa residents	Summer Summer Summer/Fall Summer April, June, September Summer & Fall Summer & Fall May-September	Key advertising mediums to increase awareness and generate interest to travel .	York Region Industry Partners Tourism Toronto <i>Advertising buy-in opportunities will be co-ordinated by York Region based on sufficient industry partner participation</i>	Increase awareness, generate visitation, increase tourism revenues and overnight stays Motivate travellers into York Region

OPPORTUNITY	TARGET AUDIENCE	TIME FRAME	PRODUCT STRENGTH	RESOURCES/SUPPORT	TARGETED RESULTS
• AAA Michigan Living	Michigan residents	Summer & Fall			
• AAA Going Place (N.Y)	Upstate NY residents	Summer & Fall			
• Tourism Toronto Visitors' Guide and Web site	All market segments. Web to include Asian translation for York Region	Spring/Summer Fall/Winter			
• Festival and Events Ontario	All market segments				
• Provincial Road Map	All market segments				
• Globe & Mail Explore Ontario	All market segments				
• Other mediums including television, radio and print to be determined	Targeted market segments				

TRAVEL TRADE MARKET

Objective: To increase visitation through targeted marketing initiatives directed at Tour Groups and (FIT) Fully Independent Travellers from Ontario, U.S.A. and International markets.

OPPORTUNITY	TARGET AUDIENCE	TIME FRAME	PRODUCT STRENGTH	RESOURCES/SUPPORT	TARGETED RESULTS
PROMOTIONAL PUBLICATIONS <i>Group Travel Planner</i>	Domestic, International, U.S.A. Tour Operators, Travel Agents, Group Leaders, Receptive Operators	To be determined	Development of group experience brochure targeting Tour Operators	York Region Industry Partners Tourism Toronto <i>Advertising buy-in opportunities</i>	Inclusion of York Region tourism products for the purpose of generating new overnight business and increase in group travel market share
PROMOTIONAL INITIATIVES <i>Product Testing Tours & Trade Shows</i> Could include: • <i>Ontario Motorcoach Association</i> • <i>American Bus Association</i> • <i>National Tour Association</i> • <i>Student Youth Travel Association</i>	Domestic, International, U.S.A. Tour Operators, Travel Agents, Group Leaders, Receptive Operators, Student Tour Operators	To be determined	Opportunities to market directly to the travel trade audience at key industry trade shows and advertising publications	Tourism Toronto York Region Industry Partners York Region staff attend trade shows promoting group experiences and tourism product	Build awareness of York Region as a viable group tour destination

OPPORTUNITY	TARGET AUDIENCE	TIME FRAME	PRODUCT STRENGTH	RESOURCES/SUPPORT	TARGETED RESULTS
• <i>Canadian Inbound Tourism Association (Asia/Pacific)</i> • <i>CAA</i> • <i>AAA</i> • <i>Others to be determined</i> ADVERTISING & PROMOTIONS Could include: • <i>Courier</i> • <i>Road Explorer</i> • <i>Canadascope</i> • <i>Student Traveller</i> • <i>Others mediums to be determined</i>	Asia Pacific Receptive Tour Operators			Advertising buy-in opportunities	

CORPORATE/CONVENTION/ CONFERENCE/SPORT/SMERF MARKETS

Objective: To increase visitation through targeted marketing initiatives directed at Canadian and Regional source market segments from Ontario, Canada and USA. Build demand and awareness to host sporting events.

OPPORTUNITY	TARGET AUDIENCE	TIME FRAME	PRODUCT STRENGTH	RESOURCES/SUPPORT	TARGETED RESULTS
PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS <i>KeyNote Conference and Meeting Planner</i> <i>Meetings Market Incentive program</i> <i>Sport Market</i>	Meeting Planners	To be determined	Enhancement to current publication and increase partner participation Incentive offer to encourage new business bookings	York Region Industry Partners Tourism Toronto York Region Industry Partners <i>Advertising buy-in opportunities</i>	Increase awareness of meeting facilities in York Region. Build profile to host events
SPONSORSHIPS & PROMOTIONS Advertising and product testing tours could include: <i>Meeting and Travel Group</i> <i>Meeting Planners International</i>	Meeting Planners	To be determined	Attract Canadian and Regional source city meeting market buyers	Tourism Toronto York Region Industry Partners <i>Advertising buy-in opportunities</i>	Increase awareness and generate new corporate, association segment overnight meetings and conferences.

OPPORTUNITY	TARGET AUDIENCE	TIME FRAME	PRODUCT STRENGTH	RESOURCES/SUPPORT	TARGETED RESULTS
<i>Canadian Society of Association Executives</i> <i>Globe & Mail Inconference</i> <i>Independent Meeting Planners Association Canada</i> <i>Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance</i>	Sport Associations and related recreational organizations				Encourage events

INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT

Objective: Increase awareness of marketing programs, enhance communication channels, provide educational programs, consumer research and partnership opportunities to support industry sustainability and growth.

OPPORTUNITY	TARGET AUDIENCE	TIME FRAME	PRODUCT STRENGTH	RESOURCES/SUPPORT	TARGETED RESULTS
NEWSLETTER <i>Tourism News</i>	York Region tourism industry	Through out the year	Key communication tool within the industry	York Region	Increase communication of Regions' activities and other industry opportunities
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM	York Region tourism industry	Throughout the year	Provide networking and educational opportunities	York Region Industry participation fee	Ensuring a competitive edge for York Region's tourism industry
<i>4th Annual York Region Tourism Conference</i>	York Region Tourism Industry & Stakeholders Municipalities, BIA	October 3, 2005 The Manor, Carrying Place Golf & Country Club, Kettleby			

OPPORTUNITY	TARGET AUDIENCE	TIME FRAME	PRODUCT STRENGTH	RESOURCES/SUPPORT	TARGETED RESULTS
EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS <i>Could include:</i> OTMP Tourism Inc <i>Your Roadmap to Success in the Tourism Industry</i> <i>Marketing</i> <i>Communications & Public Relations</i> <i>Tracking Marketing Communications and Public Relations Success</i> OMCA - Working with Tour Operators					
RESEARCH <i>Premier Ranked Tourist Destination</i>	York Region tourism businesses	August 2005 with proposed completion date July 2006	Provide a better understanding of the region's tourism product, weakness, opportunities and strengths	York Region staff Industry Partners Ontario Tourism	Evaluate the regions' performance to attract tourism investment, create employment and sustain economic stability

OPPORTUNITY	TARGET AUDIENCE	TIME FRAME	PRODUCT STRENGTH	RESOURCES/SUPPORT	TARGETED RESULTS
<i>An Overview of Tourism in York Region</i>			Obtain latest Statistics Canada visitation and revenue analysis for York Region	Research Resolutions York Region	Be able to make informed decisions
YORK REGION TOURISM ADVISORY GROUP	Regional Council All levels of Government Tourism Organization	Year round	Key industry leaders participating in Regional Council authorized advisory group	Industry Partners, York Region staff	To establish an ad hoc committee to provide leverage the profile of the regions' tourism program
COMMUNITY TOURISM PARTNER CONSULTATIONS AND LOCAL MUNICIPAL INITIATIVES	Currently includes: Tourism Markham Vaughan Tourism Advisory Group Georgina Visioning Artslink York Region Chambers of Commerce Business Improvement Associations and other local municipality community groups	On going staff involvement with local industry leading tourism organization	Build specific tourism experiences and product offerings at local level that build the destination profile	Industry Partners, York Region staff	Avoid industry fragmentation, provide market intelligence and support for local tourism efforts